

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

EA-10 FRB-01 INR-07 IO-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-06

SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /080 W

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 OECD PARIS 14548

DEPT PASS LABOR FOR METCALF

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SGEN, OECD

SUBJECT: WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL INDICATORS, MAY 20-23

1. SUMMARY. WP ON SOCIAL INDICATORS MET MAY 20-23 TO CONSIDER PROGRESS TO DATE AND FUTURE WORK. WP EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN WITH SECRETARIAT'S CONTINUING EFFORTS TO RESTRUCTURE BASIC LIST OF SOCIAL CONCERNS (PHASE I), AND PROPOSED THAT ANY RESTRUCTURING BE DEFERRED UNTIL PHASE II OF PROGRAM (INDICATOR SPECIFICATION) IS COMPLETED. WP ALSO ADVISED SECRETARIAT TO PREPARE SUMMARY RECORD BY AUGUST, 1975 FOR WP CONSIDERATION AT ITS NEXT MEETING, WHICH IS TENTATIVELY SET FOR DECEMBER 15-19, 1975. DENIS JOHNSTON' OMB, LED US DEL. END SUMMARY.

2. MR. GASS, DIRECTOR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS, MANPOWER AND EDUCATION SECRETARIAT, OUTLINED THE MAIN TASK BEFORE THE WP: TO AGREE ON A SET OF WORKABLE SOCIAL INDICATORS OR PROXY MEASURES FOR USE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED IN PHASE I (AS SUBSEQUENTLY AMENDED). GASS NOTED WHEN THIS TASK IS COMPLETED IT WILL THEN BE POSSIBLE TO UNDERTAKE, ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS, THE ASSEMBLY OF SELECTED BODIES OF DATA FROM MEMBER COUNTRIES DURING

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1976. THE EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THIS EXERCISE WILL

PROVIDE ESSENTIAL "FEED-BACK" INFORMATION ON THE BASIS OF WHICH FURTHER REVISIONS OF THE BASIC FRAMEWORK OF CONCERNS (PHASE I) AND IMPROVED INDICATOR SPECIFICATIONS (PHASE II) CAN BE MADE, AS NEEDED.

3. AGENDA.

THE WP RECEIVED AND COMMENTED UPON A NUMBER OF PAPERS RELATING TO THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE LIST OF BASIC CONCERNS AND TO THE SPECIFICATION OF INDICATORS RELATING TO THESE CONCERNS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS: SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY AND PARTICIPATION; PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT; PERSONAL SAFETY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE; EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY; ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY; PROTECTION AGAINST ECONOMIC HAZARDS; AND THE QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE. WP ALSO REVIEWED A BACKGROUND PAPER PREPARED BY US DEL ON DATA DISAGGREGATION FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS, AND A SUMMARY OF MEMBER COUNTRY RESPONSES TO AN OECD QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING THEIR USE OF "SUBJECTIVE" OR PERCEPTUAL SURVEY DATA FOR ANALYTIC OR POLICY PURPOSES.

4. CONCLUSIONS.

A. THE SECRETARIAT EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH A WRITTEN PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE CANADIAN DELEGATION TO THE EFFECT THAT ANY FURTHER RESTRUCTURING OF THE BASIC LIST OF SOCIAL CONCERNS (PHASE I) SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL WP HAS COMPLETED PHASE II OF ITS ACTIVITIES (INDICATOR SPECIFICATION), AND HAS BEEN ABLE TO COLLECT

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

EA-10 FRB-01 INR-07 IO-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-06

SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /080 W

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SOME ACTUAL DATA ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS (PHASE III).
THIS POSITION WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE US AND
MOST OTHER DELEGATIONS.

B. THE SECRETARIAT WILL DRAFT A SUMMARY REPORT FOR
REVIEW IN AUGUST, 1975, WITH A SECOND DRAFT TO BE
PRESENTED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WP IN DECEMBER,
1975. THIS SUMMARY REPORT SHALL PRESENT THE REVISED
FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS, A GENERAL DISCUSSION
OF THE RELATION BETWEEN SOCIAL INDICATORS AND SOCIAL
REPORTING AND POLICY ANALYSIS, AND SOME GUIDELINES FOR
INDICATOR DEFINITION AND SPECIFICATION, INCLUDING
ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES DRAWN FROM PAPERS PREVIOUSLY SUB-
MITTED AND COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THIS MEETING.

C. THE SECRETARIAT WILL ALSO PROCEED WITH THE PREPARA-
TION OF A NUMBER OF PROGRAM REPORTS, GEARED TOWARD
SPECIALISTS AND FOCUSING ON PARTICULAR AREAS OF CON-
CERN, AND A NUMBER OF TECHNICAL REPORTS ON SUCH SUBJECTS
AS HEALTH, WORK SATISFACTION, DATA SOURCES ON CRIMINAL
VICTIMIZATION, DATA DISAGGREGATION FOR SOCIAL INDICATORS,
SOCIAL MOBILITY, ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY, AND THE CONCEPT
OF EQUALITY. THESE REPORTS WILL BE BASED ON BACKGROUND
PAPERS AND WORKING DOCUMENTS WHICH ARE ALREADY
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AVAILABLE; THEREFORE THEY WILL NOT REQUIRE EXTENSIVE
STAFF RESOURCES FOR EDITING AND PUBLICATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, AGREEMENT DRAFT, MEETINGS, SOCIAL CHANGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975OECDP14548
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750198-0387
From: OECD PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750674/aaaacpgy.tel
Line Count: 156
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 FEB 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 FEB 2003 by PhilliR0>; APPROVED <30 JAN 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WORKING PARTY ON SOCIAL INDICATORS, MAY 20-23
TAGS: ELAB, SGEN, OECD
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006